

MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION  
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

The following meeting occurred on Tuesday, March 21, 2017, commencing at 1:05 p.m. at the Maryland Transit Administration, 6 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21201.

## ATTENDEES

Father Michael Bishop	Attendee
Peggy Ann Clark	Attendee
Edward K. Cohen	Attendee
Thomas Curtis	Attendee
Liam Davis	CAC Co-Chair
Sequoia Distance	CAC Member
Laura Getty	MTA Representative
Linda Greene	CAC Member
Denise Hagans	MTA Representative
Jacquetta Hagler	MTA Representative
Marlene Hendler	CACAT Member
Nancy Huggins	CAC Chair
Joi Jackson	Attendee
Roderick Jennifer	Attendee
Claudia Lindsey	Attendee
John W. Mack	CAC Secretary
Jean Pula	CAC Member
Kevin Racine	Attendee
Tracy Schaefer	Attendee
Fremont Sturtevant	CAC Member
Michael Weinberger	MTA Representative

## Absent:

Judy Bellamy	CAC Facilitator
Dr. Osh Oshitoye	CAC Member
Katherine Hodges	CAC Member
Dr. Cecilia Davoli	CAC Member
Ankur Doshi	CAC Member
Laurie Lessans	CAC Member
Ron Skotz	CAC Member

## **AGENDA**

- I. Meeting Called to Order
- II. Welcome and Introductions  
Approval of the January 17 and February 21, 2017 Meeting Notes
- III. BaltimoreLink Public Outreach Program  
Laura Getty, BaltimoreLink Coordinator
- IV. Title VI Update  
Jacquetta Hagler, Title VI/ADA Coordinator
- V. Committee Reports
  - Mobility
  - Legislative Affairs and Customer Service
  - Infrastructure and Planning
  - Title VI and Safety
- VI. Old Business  
New Business
- VII. Public Forum Questions
- VIII. Meeting Adjourns

## **PROCEEDINGS**

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m.

Ms. Nancy Huggins started introductions. She said, "There was an abundance of letters received to join committee and phone interviews are being conducted."

### **BaltimoreLink Public Outreach**

Ms. Laura Getty said, "She has coordinated the outreach which will turn into public education."

#### **Summary of Outreach:**

Phase 1: BaltimoreLink announced in October 2015 and the first phase of outreach started. By February 2016 MTA had collected almost 1300 comments from events. This phase introduced the plan to the Baltimore region. As a response to comments, 56 of 65 routes were changed.

Phase 2: The second draft of plan was released on July 5, 2016, followed by three months of summer outreach, including more than 100 events and another 1,000 comments collected from the public.

Phase 3: This past Winter involved the public hearings. The third draft of the BaltimoreLink was released December 5th and gave a 30-day public notice of hearings. At 14 public hearings, there were 433 attendees, including 148 testimonies. The highest turnout was the hearing in Waverly with 112 people. Hearings at North Point Library and State Center were also well attended.

Following the hearings, the comment period was open through February. Between December 5th and February 21st, 1,100 comments were received.

Ms. Getty stated that the MTA has done a good job of targeting riders and the shift has come from the community at large to riders

The Administrator approved the final network design on March 20th and it will be released to the public on April 3rd.

Mr. Michael Weinberger said, "They found in comment periods that riders were upset with first phase even after changes had been made to fix them." He noted that for most individuals that see information in the bus unless it's direct service change they do not see as applicable to them. Now that BaltimoreLink has a final plan and the focus is on implementation the work is going to come in regarding education.

#### **Comments:**

1. Ms. Nancy Huggins said, "BaltimoreLink subcommittee was able to make recommendations."

2. Mr. Edward Cohen said, "He agrees that the public does not seem to get that the system is being replaced. Ms. Huggins explained that we asked them there to see how the committee can help educate
3. Ms. Jean Pula said, "People riding the bus know change is coming but that their voice does not matter. They do not think it matters if they get engaged: "It is not going to get better I just have to deal with it."

Mr. Weinberger said, "The main avenue they were able to challenge that was at the popup events." One woman who they met learned that she could now take one bus instead of three. BaltimoreLink has a much higher level of feedback than ever in MTA's engagement process. We have to go to people instead of not making them come to us.

4. Ms. Jean Pula: Do you have Spanish liaisons? There are a lot of Latinos who are not as proficient in english as the balance of the ridership.

Mr. Weinberger said, "The team hired for popup events have Spanish speaking members so they can target street teams to meet those needs."

5. Mr. Kevin Racine: When you talk about the Link who are you going after? Ms. Getty explained that the MTA service area includes Baltimore City, Baltimore, and Anne Arundel counties. Mr. Racine is concerned with people in Harford County who want to go south but have no idea about BaltimoreLink. Ms. Huggins responded that the BaltimoreLink is the core service and that the Harford Link is locally operated.

Mr. Weinberger said, "MTA is working with MTA LOTS and partnerships with travel train and through community partnerships to disseminate materials anywhere they are needed."  
Mr. Racine said, "Those letters must be on commuter buses."

## **BaltimoreLink Education**

Ms. Getty explained that the BaltimoreLink outreach team has from now until June 18th to educate the public on BaltimoreLink. BaltimoreLink education will be provided through the following avenues:

- **MTA InReach**

1. Operations staff

Operator InReach program: Bus operators have been fully engaged in reviewing and formulating the BaltimoreLink plan, providing over 1,100 comments which have led to changes in schedules, signs and layovers based on this feedback.

Operator Training: This includes first working with drivers using routes with same alignments but new names then drivers with changing alignments. Moving forward training will focus on what operators need on day 1 but huge percentage of comments was on public education. Drivers brought up issues with seniors, students, disabled... they've seen riders confused angry and scared.

Operations training also includes Light Rail/Metro/MARC and MTA police.

2. Non-Operations Staff

All MTA staff must understand BaltimoreLink. The Administrator sent out a video about BaltimoreLink to staff. Ms. Huggins asked Ms. Getty to share the video with the committee.

- **Active Rider Outreach**

1. BaltimoreLink Info Bus: This is an MTA comfort bus wrapped in BaltimoreLink branding and decked out with maps and boards. April 3rd this bus will hit the streets and every existing route, picking up people for free and explaining to everyone what is happening to the route. It will operate Monday-Friday during peak times. Staff on the bus will hand out Rider Alert brochures explaining how the routes are changing.

Question about handouts: Mr. Cohen asked if the handouts will be different at each route. Ms. Getty said, "Like the route comparison maps on the website, the handouts will detail each portion of the route and what will happen to it." Mr. Cohen added that it is important that there be a rack with schedules on each bus and it be full. Ms. Getty said, "Schedules and rider alerts will be on proper buses and switched out every morning to be on the right spot."

2. Street Teams

Thirty Baltimore ambassadors are being deployed six weeks before and through two weeks after the launch. They will ride on high ridership buses and be at stops and conduct one-on-one training with riders. Ambassadors will wear BaltimoreLink shirts, yellow smocks, hats, and BaltimoreLink backpacks so they are well identifiable

3. Popup events: 2-3 events per week in April and five per week in June. These include tents, boards, and street team gear.

Ms. Huggins asked if Ms. Getty could share the schedule then CAC members could attend. Mr. Weinberger said, "This is where you catch midday riders."

Questions:

1. **Visitors:** Ms. Greene asked if outreach program is considering how to address people visiting Baltimore or new to the area. She mentioned providing information to the Convention Center and sales staff, as well as staff at Visit Baltimore and BWI. Conventions come to town who ask about transit and the center has no information to share. Mr. Weinberg said, "MTA also has partnerships and sponsorships to do events to reach more people like visitors." He asked if there are active staff at these places who can distribute information.

Ms. Huggins said, "BWI has Pathfinders." Ms. Greene said, "The Convention Center if you reach out to the sales staff, the info could be put in packets given to conference attendees." Ms. Huggins said, "There is a hotel group sales team that has a monthly event where you could present." Ms. Greene added that the Maryland Hotel and Motel Association could help you reach the downtown hotels using the info racks near the front desks. Ms. Getty said, "MTA has a contract with the racks in those hotels."

2. **Ambassadors:** Mr. Fremont Sturtevant asked about the decision to have ambassadors available for eight weeks and why it is six and two. Ms. Getty said, "The focus is getting people before they get on bus for first time on June 18th so there is no surprise." Popup events will continue after launch. MTA staff will be deployed for a month after launch.

Mr. Weinberger added that the Info bus starts prior to that six-week period. Travel training will be available throughout the year.

**Outreach focus:** Ms. Getty explained that now they are meeting with stakeholders and the message has shifted to helping them get the message out to community members. There is a form on the BaltimoreLink website where a community association can request a briefing. They get requests daily.

Ms. Greene asked if the outreach team can develop and email that a neighborhood association can send out. Ms. Getty replied yes.

### **Travel Training with Center for Mobility Equity**

This center focuses on people with disabilities and those seeking job access as well as students to help them be more independent.

Travel Training is designed to take the intimidation out of transit. Participants learn how to use transit through either one-on-one or group trainings (popular with students in Baltimore City), and train the trainer (focus on people who have barriers to using the system).

There will be two trainings per week in April and May of 2017.

### **Students – Reaching Them**

Ms. Hagler asked with school ending how will BaltimoreLink reach students who are going to use the system.

Mr. Weinberger explained that they have done a lot of work with student leadership. They have a relationship with the student governments and are using digital tools like Blackboard, email, Snapchat, and other social media. Ms. Hagler cautioned that you cannot start at North Avenue to reach students.

Suggestions for reaching students:

1. Go to the schools to the guidance counselor, people who are directly involved with the students (Ms. Hagler)
2. Reach out to continuing education centers over the summer (Ms. Greene)
3. Hold an assembly about BaltimoreLink at each school (Mr. Cohen)
4. Stick BaltimoreLink info in report cards (Ms. Hagler)

Other Community Outreach includes the following:

- Hospitals:
- Dialysis Centers
- Colleges
- Welcome Centers
- Hotels
- Will add Convention Center to the list
- Major Employers: several meetings with FedEx, Amazon, Trade Point. Ms. Greene said, "To focus on Baltimore County employers."
- MTA is also member of several Chambers of Commerce in the region.
- Elected Officials have been briefed at every draft.

Mr. Weinberger asked CAC to put together a list as to where BaltimoreLink should present. If CAC can think of partners or redundancies let BaltimoreLink know. The only thing limiting outreach is capacity; that's where partners come in.

Other CAC recommendations:

1. Administrator should do more TV like Channel 11 to reach the elderly (Mr. Cohen)
2. MTA information line should stay open longer at night (Ms. Greene)
3. Create a link to transit app since there isn't an MTA app (Ms. Greene)

Mr. Weinberger said, "They are working with Google to have stop-level notifications...and a transit app."

4. Work with CASA (Ms. Davis)
5. Youth Works is having follow-up interviews which is a good opportunity to share info (Ms. Hagler).

## **Title VI Update**

Ms. Jackie Hagler said, "The MTA submitted their program to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and is awaiting concurrence. MTA's program is part of One MDOT program. She explained that Title VI is a Civil Rights law stipulating that MTA will not discriminate in any services it provides to the public. This regulation makes sure everything the agency does is fair. MTA writes a report every three years to FTA outlining what the agency is doing to address and prevent discriminatory acts.



## Committee Reports

- **Title VI and Safety:** The subcommittee discussed how the Title VI methodology is flawed because it applies the wrong standard to Commuter Buses which use the Baltimore Beltway. The issue is that under current methodology you look at census tracks for where buses travel to determine Title VI compliance but when you utilize freeway data for large portion of route those communities you drive through are not using those routes because there are no freeway bus stops.

**The subcommittee made a recommendation:** The current methodology should be reconsidered; with a greater focus on intersecting local bus lines. MTA should look at other major US transit organizations to make modifications.

Mr. Cohen said, "That the connecting bus data should be used for Title VI purposes."

1. Ms. Pula made a motion to accept the recommendations.
2. Mr. John Mack asked if CAC needs to reach out to MTA Transit to review their methodology.
3. Ms. Huggins said, "CAC has a motion to accept the recommendations from the Title VI and Safety committee and clarified that this is just CAC as a group accepting the recommendation."
4. The next step is to determine where to send the recommendation. She recommends the Title VI office and Ms. Hagler agreed. Mr. Mack said, "It should be forwarded to both the MTA and Title VI."
5. CAC decided to send the recommendations to Ross Turlington, Judy Bellamy and Denise Hagans. Ms. Huggins asked Denise to make sure the recommendations are distributed. Ms. Hagler said, "She can sit with Tom to talk about it and see if there are any other alternatives but it is in the hands of the FTA."

**Infrastructure and Planning:** Ms. Peggy Clark wants to discuss the resolution the subcommittee presented to CACAT. She asked Ms. Hagans to send it to CAC.

## CAC Bylaw Amendment

The MTA Administrators office presented to the CAC an amendment to the "Committee Bylaws; Article IX Procedures and Protocols; Paragraph 9.01; item (d) At all meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee one half (1/2) of current members is necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not reached a CAC meeting may still occur; however, no officer voting, or policy adoptions may take place until a quorum has been reached."

Ms. Huggins read the definition of quorum. for the committee members benefit.

### **Meeting Minutes Approval**

The Chair acknowledged and determined that a quorum of the Committee was present and that a motion for approving the previous meeting minutes could be made.

Mr. Mack made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for January 17<sup>th</sup> and February 21, 2017 as written. Motion was seconded and the motion passed; minutes are approved.

The next meeting is April 18 at 11:00 a.m.

The meeting is adjourned at 2:19